THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (d) The Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGOM) to examine and consider the issues of gas pricing and commercial utilization of gas under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Research studies on global warming

744. SHRI. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the research institutes under the Ministry are working in a coordinated manner to resolve issues pertaining to global warming, that are either directly or indirectly affecting the socio-economic growth of the country;

(b) if so, whether research studies are done on melting down of Himalayan Glaciers, increased occurrence of cyclone, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, flash floods, cloud bursts, etc;

(c) if so, the details thereof; along with the breakthrough made, if any; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), and other concerned institutes of the Ministry are working in a coordinated manner to address the science issues related to global warming. Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology(WIHG) is also pursuing research related to climate change/global warming using the various proxies and geological records. The findings on trends of climate change over the Indian region have formed the basis for further impact studies on socio-economic aspects carried out by other research groups.

(b) and (c) Several studies have been undertaken by the IITM, Pune, National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) and IMD on the cyclonic disturbances that form in Bay of Bengal and cross Andhra Coast. In general it was observed that the number of intense storms (monsoon depressions) that form over the Bay of Bengal have been showing a decline during the past 2-3 decades while there is a general increasing trend in the low-pressure systems (low-intensity). There are no conclusive results yet obtained on trends of flash floods and cloud bursts.

It is well-established fact that glaciers, in general, including the Himalayan glaciers, recede or build-up in response to variations in temperature of the region in which they are located. The analysis of temperature data for more than a century indicates slight increase of temperature, particularly in the winter season over the Western Himalayan region with some local variations. The recession in glaciers could be attributed to various reasons, including the possibility due to global warming. In the past 7,50,000 years, there have been Ice Age cycles, separated by warmer periods

called interglacial periods. This is part of the normal climate variation cycle. The effects of Greenhouse warming, if any. shall be superimposed on such natural variations. Due to such complexities it is difficult to make clear attribution of the observed recession of Himalayan glaciers to global warming.

(d) Does not arise.

Setting up of food parks in Uttarakhand

†745. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for setting up of food parks in Uttrakhand during 2007-08;

(b) if so, whether the locations have been earmarked for this purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the steps Government propose to do away with the delays in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (d) Ministry of Food Processing Industries, has been providing financial assistance for setting up of Food Park under its Plan scheme @ 25% of project cost in general areas and 33.33% of project cost in difficult areas, subject to maximum of Rs. 4.00 crore for creation of common facilities such as power supply, water supply, cold storage, warehousing facilities, effluent treatment plant, food testing analytical laboratories, common processing facilities etc. The Ministry does not set up food parks on its own. Ministry had received a proposal for setting up of Food Park in District-Haridwar, Uttarakhand which has been examined and deficient information/documents have been sought from the applicant for further action.

Monitoring on meat and meat products

746. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal before Government for overseeing or monitoring the meat and meat products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is also a proposal to set up the National Meat Board;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Board would oversee the growth and promote meat and poultry sector in the country; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.